CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of inhibiting or reducing self-administration of a substance of abuse by a mammal, said method comprising administering to said mammal an NK1 receptor antagonist in a concentration sufficient to reduce self-administration of a substance of abuse.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said substance of abuse is selected from the group consisting of cocaine, an amphetamine, an opiate, a cannabinoid, nicotine, and alcohol

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said substance of abuse is alcohol.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said administering reduces preference for the substance of abuse.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein said administering reduces preference for alcohol.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said NK1 receptor antagonist is selected from the group consisting of LY303870, Sigma WIN 51,708, GR205171A, Takeda TAK-637, SR-140333, Merc MK869, MEN 11467, triazole NK1 receptor antagonists (see WO 99/38533A1), CP-99,994, GlaxoSmith-Kline GW597599, and CJ-12,255

7. The method of claim 6, wherein said NK1 receptor antagonist is LY303870.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein said NK1 receptor antagonist is Sigma WIN 51,708.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein said NK1 receptor antagonist is orally administered.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein said NK1 receptor antagonist is injected.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein said NK1 receptor antagonist is in a unit dosage formulation.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein said mammal is a human.

13. The method of claim 1, wherein said mammal is a human.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein said mammal is a non-human mammal.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein said mammal shows one or more symptoms characteristic of addiction to a substance of abuse.

16. The method of claim 13, wherein said mammal is diagnosed as chronically consuming a substance of abuse.

17. The method of claim 13, wherein said mammal has ceased chronic consumption of a substance of abuse.

18. The method of any one of claims 15 through 17, wherein said substance of abuse is alcohol.

19. The method of claim 1, wherein said NK1 receptor antagonist is administered at a dosage ranging from about 1 to about 100 mg/kg daily.

20. The method of claim 1, wherein said NK1 receptor antagonist is administered in a unit dosage formulation.

21. A kit for inhibiting or reducing self-administration of a substance of abuse, said kit comprising:

a container containing one or more NK1 receptor antagonists; and

instructional materials teaching the use of an NK1 receptor antagonist to inhibit self-administration of a substance of abuse.

22. The kit of claim 21, wherein said NK1 receptor antagonist is selected from the group consisting of LY303870, Sigma WIN 51,708, GR205171A, Takeda TAK-637, SR-140333, Merc MK869, MEN 11467, triazole NK1 receptor antagonists (see WO 99/38533A1), CP-99,994, GlaxoSmith-Kline GW597599, and CJ-12,255

23. The kit of claim 21, wherein said NK1 receptor antagonist is LY303870.

24. The kit of claim 21, wherein said NK1 receptor antagonist is Sigma WIN 51,708.

25. The kit of claim 21, wherein said substance of abuse is alcohol.

26. A method of screening for an agent that reduces self-administration of a substance of abuse by a mammal, said method comprising:

administering a test agent to said mammal; and

screening said mammal for NK1 antagonistic activity, wherein NK1 antagonistic activity indicates that said agent is an agent that is likely to reduce self administration of a substance of abuse.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein said screening comprises screening said test agent for the ability to inhibit a caudally directed, biting and scratching response elicited by intrathecal administration of Ac-[Arg^6,Sar^9,$Met(O_2)^{11}$]substance P6–11 in conscious mice.

28. The method of claim 26, wherein said screening comprises screening said test agent for the ability to inhibit or fully block the potentiation of the tail-flick response elicited by intrathecal administration [Sar^9,$Met(O_2)_{11}$]substance P in rats.

29. A method of screening for an agent that reduces self-administration of a substance of abuse by a mammal, said method comprising:

contacting a cell comprising an NK1 receptor with a test agent; and

detecting expression or activity of said NK1 receptor or an NK1 receptor pathway, wherein an inhibition of NK1 receptor expression or activity as compared to NK1 receptor expression or activity in a control cell indicates that said test agent is a

candidate agent for use in reducing self-administration of a substance of abuse by a mammal.

30. The method of claim 29, wherein said cell is a neural cell.

31. The method of claim 29, wherein said cell is a neural cell in a brain slice preparation.

32. The method of claim 29, wherein said cell is a neural cell in *in vitro* culture.

33. The method of claim 29, wherein said cell is a HEK cell expressing an NK1 receptor.